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**Visual Ranking Tool Assignment**

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1. **Explore the Intel Visual Ranking Tool. Click on the Overview and Benefits link. How does the tool facilitate students’ critical thinking?**

As the intel site explains, “in teams, they collaborate and negotiate their reasoning.” While this is true, the tool could also be used by independent students to work through lists on their own, deciding what is the most important item. This Visual Ranking Tool offers an easy-to-organize way of laying out information in a hierarchal context. The student is invited to think critically about what is the most important in terms of the other items or to discuss this in a group of their peers and critically deduce what their values may or may not be.   
**Consider the type of reasoning students demonstrate as they do Visual Ranking and how their activity involves both the cognitive and affective domains.**

It seems that naturally, students would simultaneously reason their way through a list of items both affectively and cognitively. For instance, if they were given a passage to read about a boy being bullied and a list of possible reactions he may perform when confronted with his bully, and he was asked to rate them in terms of the first being the best response to the situation, and the last being the worst reaction to the situation, he may first act affectively, probably having been bullied, bullied himself, or know people who have been victimized by bullying. Although, he would probably simultaneously look for the most logical response, which in many cases, would be to first pick the choice that would immediately remove him from potential danger.

I think that this tool can give students an interesting way to think through certain situations or ideas and rate them accordingly. The hierarchal demand of the tool in the situation I presented would then force the child not to think, ‘what’s the best thing to do?’ but would require them to think ‘why is it the best thing to do?’ and gives a comment space for them to justify their response. The comparison device allows them to understand their values in terms of other students, which is important to help the student form their own values in turn. This is very important. So often students do not have any experience in making reasoned choices or justifying their decisions. This is a very important citizenship skill.

The tool is developed to activate different types of thought in each domain. In the cognitive domain, it activates knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. While putting the items in order, these are the bells and whistles that are in motion in the cognitive domain. For example, the student is forced to think ‘what is bullying and what is appropriate behavior to exhibit towards other children?” (activating their social knowledge). The other domain of reasoning that the tool is developed to activate is the affective domain of the brain, which consists of receiving, responding, valuing, organizing, and internalizing. For instance, the student is forced to think, ‘would it be right for me to run away or to stand up to my bully?’ (the student accesses and internalized his *values).* We used to call this values clarification.

1. **Next click on the Tutorial (underneath Demo on the Try the Tool page) and view the animation. What are the key steps a teacher must take to set up the Visual Ranking Tool and engage students in using the tool? Read the directions on pages 1-5 of the tutorial.** First, the teacher must decide what the objective of the ranking will be, describe the project to the students, and create a prompt for the students to respond to. She then would create the list of items to be ranked. Use the comparison tool to engage them; they will be interested to find what their peers feel/think about the same subject.   
   **3. Click on the Project Examples link and explore the Project Ideas and Unit Plans. How do the examples stimulate your thinking of how to use the Visual Ranking Tool?  
   Consider the grade level and subject area you plan to teach and how you could modify one of the projects or create your own from scratch. What curriculum goals would your Visual Ranking project address?**

I am truly glad that the unit plan examples put everything into context, so that I understand better how I may use this tool in my classroom. It looks as though you can incorporate it into many different kinds of lessons, and it can even stand alone as a tool in developing my lessons.

I plan to teach K-5 General Music, and I can see using the Visual Ranking Tool to get input from my students. I could use it with my graduating 5th graders to find out what they found the most interesting or useful in their music education in my classroom, or what they were disengaged by, etc. I could also use it to have my intermediate grade students rate which pieces they would like to return to later in the year for a performance. It’s a quick and way to get feedback from all the students in the class.

One of my major goals in creating a curriculum of my own is to keep my students interests in mind. I would like to teach them music they *want* to learn and are genuinely interested in while immersing them in knowledge. I, of course, want to teach them music and concepts that lead them to being musically literate human beings capable of great skill and creativity, but as music is an art, I would also love to have their personal input regarding what they would like to learn. This tool, therefore, could help me a great deal with this curricular goal. +5